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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates how to train teachers in Christian schools for the integration of faith and learning (IFL) in their classrooms, noting that professional development of teachers in Christian schools can foster IFL in individual classrooms and entire campuses. The paper focuses on Jesus's training methodology, identifying components used in the training of his disciples, comparing them with current research on training, and suggesting implications for IFL training. The five components of professional development include: addressing declarative knowledge, acquiring procedural knowledge, practicing under simulated conditions, providing feedback, and offering peer coaching. The concept of professional development fits within the Divine perspective of discipline. The Bible gives several examples of individuals who turned their followers into leaders, with Jesus Christ the greatest professional developer recorded in the Bible. Christ's professional development program found its culmination in the training of the 12 disciples. Christ's method of teaching incorporated the five components of professional development. Teachers in Christian schools need study groups on their campuses in order to maintain continuity and effectiveness in the implementation of IFL in their classrooms. Campuses should designate time each month for faith learning activities. The purpose of these study groups should be to help teachers acquire the knowledge and skills they need to integrate faith and learning. (Contains 24 tables and 31 references.) (SM)

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# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS: A PROCESS FOR INTEGRATING FAITH AND LEARNING IN CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

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# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS: A PROCESS FOR INTEGRATING FAITH AND LEARNING IN CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS


## Abstract

Integration of faith and learning (IFL) is the raison d'etre for Christian schools. Yet many teachers are not quite sure how to integrate faith and content in their classrooms. Part of the reason for this lack of implementation is inadequate preparation of teachers. Professional development of teachers in Christian schools can foster integration of faith and learning both in individual classroom and campus wide. In this paper I investigate the issue of training methodology used in IFL professional development programs.

Professional development programs take many forms and last from a few hours to several months or longer. Regardless of the duration of these programs and their forms, the instructional processes used in designing and delivering training are crucial to their effectiveness. This paper takes a critical look at Jesus' training methodology, identifying the components used in the training of His disciples, comparing them with current research on training, and suggesting implications for IFL training. These components can be


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used to develop professional development programs that are channels for perpetuating integration of faith and learning in Christian schools just as they perpetuated the gospel during the days of the apostles and perpetuate modern teaching innovations.

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS: A PROCESS FOR INTEGRATING FAITH AND LEARNING IN CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

The first two chapters of Genesis tell us that when God finished with His work of creation, He saw that everything He made was very good and that a cordial relationship existed between Him and our first parents. Unfortunately, this cordiality did not last. Sin infected the planet, jeopardizing humankind's relationship with the Creator.

From creation, Satan has sought feverishly to destroy faith in God. He is even more furious now, using every channel to distract attention from God (1 Peter 5:8). Human beings have become so hedonistic and self-centered as to not feel the need of God any more. Survival of the fittest and "I can do it by myself" have become a way of life. These ideologies are representative of the different worldviews that permeate our society and that are reflected in our schools.

Christian schools used to be places where learning was advanced and values elevated. Today, they may not be. "Dualism

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has remained with us...[and have] permeated our consciousness--and therefore our world view" (Walsh and Middleton, 1984, p. 100). Christian schools and colleges are at risk to the rampant deterioration of the culture. And as one of my professors said, they have become "secular salad with religious toppings" (Akers, 1994).

With such critical situations facing schools today, how can Christian educational institutions fulfill their mission? How can they maintain the role of the schools of the prophets assigned them in order to keep the faith of their fathers? One significant solution is to foster integration of faith and learning (IFL) in the classrooms.

## Biblical Mandate for Integration of Faith and Learning

Integration of faith and learning in Christian schools is a Divine imperative. Holmes (1993) presents seven points to show that integration is a biblical mandate.

1. There is a biblical mandate to do and make use of the arts and sciences.
2. The biblical narrative helps us to understand the possibilities and present state of our disciplines and professions.
3. Biblical ideals guide the application of our skills and our knowledge.
4. Biblical theology addresses the theoretical assumptions of our disciplines.
5. Biblical concepts intersect with particular concepts

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and theories in the disciplines.

6. There are biblical implications for the methodology and knowledge claims of our disciplines.
7. Biblical virtues are requisite for disciplined scholarship and teaching (1993, pp.1-4).

To integrate faith into the curriculum of Christian schools and colleges, we need the Bible to guide us in all our teaching. The Bible is filled with stories and ideals that assist us in understanding the situations we find in our disciplines and professions. We need the Bible to guide us in the choice of goals, theories, and methodologies. Furthermore, the Bible teaches essential virtues. We need to develop these virtues personally and inculcate them in our students (Holmes 1993).

For integration of faith and learning to become a reality on the Christian college and university campuses, teachers must realize that the work of education and redemption are the same (White, 1952, p. 16). Holmes (1993) sums up these points by observing that

> the linkage between spirituality and learning is a part of the relationship between faith and learning . . . Faith is not just the content of biblical teaching, but my continued responsiveness to God Himself. So the integration of faith and learning includes integration of spirituality into my work . . .(p. 4).

It is in recognition of this spiritual mandate that

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some Christian schools sponsor seminars on integration of faith and learning for their faculty. I have been privileged to attend and study some of these seminars in different Christian institutions of higher learning. In comparing my observations of the processes used at the seminars with research on the delivery of complex innovations, I noticed a lack of depth in the training and little or no provision was made for follow-up to training. Participants at IFL seminars were exposed to quality materials that discussed the theories, backgrounds, issues, and implications for integrating faith and learning in Christian schools. However, there was no provision made for practising and internalizing what they learned. Without practice and internalization, transfer does not happen (Fogarty, Perkins, and Barell, 1992).

It is important to note that there are two kinds of knowledge: declarative and procedural knowledge. Declarative knowledge is cognitive understanding. It can be obtained through lectures, discussions, memorization, and other techniques. Procedural knowledge is ability to perform a skill (Marzano & Pickéring, 1997).

In the training process for IFL, teachers need to gain both declarative and procedural knowledge. Despite how well

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human beings develop cognitive understanding, mastery of procedural skills is always more problematic. To learn *about* something is different from learning *to do* something.

To facilitate the acquisition and implementation of IFL's procedural knowledge, Christian schools could establish professional development programs for teachers. This would not only help teachers to retain what they learned at the seminars, but at the same time assist collegial interaction on IFL. Moreover, it will continue to nurture teachers both individually and collectively and enable them to pass on their faith to their students. The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to propose a professional development program that will enhance implementation of faith and learning in Christian classrooms.

## Professional Development Program on Integration of Faith and Learning

Professional development has been defined as a "planned, comprehensive, and systematic program designed by the system to improve all school personnel's ability to design, implement, and assess productive change in each individual and in the school organization" (Bellanca, 1995, p. 6). Professional development includes activities or processes that assist in improving the "skills, attitudes, understanding, or performance"

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(Little and Loucks-Horsley in Fullan, 1990, p. 3). These programs have sometimes been called inservice training, human resource development, staff development, or assistance (Mazzarella, 1980; Giroux, 1990; Fullan, 1990; Butler, 1992).

Professional development programs have been conducted in different forms at different places, and their duration has ranged from a few hours to several months or longer. In some schools, though, such programs are on-going, included in the calendar of events of the school. Regardless of the duration of these programs and their forms, the instructional processes used in designing and delivering them are crucial to their effectiveness (Joyce & Showers, 1982, 1988, 1995).

Biblical Foundations for Professional-development

The concept of professional development fits within the Divine perspective of discipling. One definition of it is to turn followers into leaders. The Bible gives several examples of individuals who turned their followers into leaders. These examples can be found both in the Old and the New Testament. Before Moses died he trained Joshua. Joshua became the leader of the Israelites and led them into the promised land. Prior to Elijah's translation into heaven, he developed Elisha's skills

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such that Elisha became one of the most important prophets in Israel(Youssef, 1986).

There are also examples of professional development in the New Testament. Paul was a good professional developer. He took several people with him each time he went on his missionary journeys. He trained these people who in turn trained others. He discipled John Mark to become more responsible (2 Timothy 4:11). Paul probably helped Priscilla and Aquila to develop the skills of preaching (Acts 18:2). Shortly after Paul's stay with them, Priscilla and Aquila explained to Apollos "the way of God more accurately" (verse 26). They in turn trained Apollos (Youssef, 1986). Paul saw the importance of developing human resources. On one occasion he wrote to Timothy, "*And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also*" (2 Timothy 2:2, my emphasis). Youssef (1986) notes that it is this method of discipleship that "perpetuated" (p. 165) the gospel.

The greatest professional developer recorded in the Bible is Jesus Christ Himself. In Luke 4:18,19 Christ "defined His mission as liberating captives, healing the afflicted, restoring sight to the blind, and enlightening the world with truth (Youngberg, 1994, p. 52). And throughout His life on

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earth, He spent His time developing men and women physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually. Everyone who had contact with Him left better than when they met Him.

Christ's professional development program found its culmination in the training of His twelve disciples. "It is evident that Jesus did not choose the prominent and illustrious, but men whom others would have considered unlikely leaders" (Youngberg, 1994, p.60). And we do not see much ability in most of them. Levi was a tax collector; Peter, James, and John were fishermen. Yet "Jesus did not wait for leadership to present itself" (Youssef, 1986, p. 155) in them. Because He saw their potential, He chose them and worked patiently with them until He brought out the best in them.

One of the goals of professional developers is to prepare others to take over from them and at the same time do a better job. Youssef (1986) observes that this was what Jesus did with His disciples. He taught them, rebuked them, built them up, and showed them the way. In John 14:12, Christ stated one of the principles of effective professional developers: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; *and greater works than these he will do* . . . ." (John 14:12).

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Components of Effective Professional Development Programs

One of the issues that arise in professional development is that of the training methodology. A synthesis of research on effective professional development programs reveals some essential components that enhance effectiveness. Joyce and Showers (1980, 1988, 1995) identified five of these and remark that combining all five components result in maximum effectiveness. These components include:

- an exploration of theory through discussions, readings, lectures, etc
- a demonstration or modelling of skill
- a practice of skill under simulated conditions
- Structured and open-ended feedback (provision of information about performance)
- peer coaching (Joyce & Showers, 1980, 1988, 1995).

These five components are not linear in operation. Whether the process begins with step one or two, the important thing is the presence of all the components.

The first component of effective professional development addresses declarative knowledge. Here the professional developer gives the background of the innovation. She takes time to explain the rationale, theory, and research that surround the innovation; discusses its advantages; and gives necessary information about what is being studied, including the

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goals, objectives, and key ideas. This step helps the learners to understand what they are doing and why. It also serves to increase their interest in the innovation.

The acquisition of procedural knowledge is begun with the second component. During this phase of professional development, the trainer *shows* the learners *how to do* what is being introduced and how it works. For example, if the focus of the training is on the integration of faith and learning in chemistry, the expert could *demonstrate* this by presenting a lesson on chemistry either in person or by video. The focus here is on *showing*, not telling. This step is crucial because many people are visual learners and need to see a process and participate in it before they can begin to understand it.

The next component after modelling is *practice* under simulated conditions. Learners are given the opportunity to practice the new skill to see how well they have internalized the process. They should be encouraged to select topics in their discipline or areas of interests, and following the model presented by the expert, plan and teach it to a group of colleagues. This aspect of training helps learners to grasp the model comfortably before they present it to "real" students, and expedites the transfer of knowledge and skill.

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For training in any innovation to transfer to the classroom setting, teachers must practice the technique a number of times in both simulated and actual settings. Showers, Joyce, and Bennett (1987) observe that teachers need between 20 and 30 practices in order to sufficiently master any new skill and to incorporate it into their teaching repertoire. And Joyce and Showers (1995) stated that "to bring a model of teaching of medium complexity under control requires 20 or 25 trials in the classroom over a period of about eight or ten weeks" (p. 110). These observations show that practice is important for the effective implementation of any innovation.

The fourth component of effective professional development is feedback. Feedback about performance expedites the development of skills. Feedback helps to provide information about performance in the practice without making the learner feel uncomfortable. For instance, instead of telling the learner that an aspect was not done well, the person is asked to describe what was done at each step and suggestions about how they think the process could be improved.

Feedback encourages collegiality among learners and makes practice "safe" and more likely to continue. Feedback should happen soon after practice for effectiveness. Teachers

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can use audio or video to provide feedback to each other. They can learn to critique themselves once they understand the skill they are learning and how to use it (Joyce & Showers, 1988). Feedback can be either structured or open-ended. A structured feedback could be a form made up of questions asking participants to describe what they did at different steps of the innovation. Open-ended feedback consists of oral questions.

The fifth component of effective professional development is peer coaching. Coaching brings teachers together as a community of learners and helps them to develop a common language and understanding needed for the new skill they are learning. At the same time it provides for follow-up to training (Showers, 1985) to help with the implementation of the new skill and knowledge by providing a human support system.

It is important that learners continue to strengthen their new instructional skills. What this means in practice is that training should be done in collaborative group of at least two teachers. Larger teams of three to six are even more effective (Murphy, 1992). Peer coaching among teachers has been found to be an effective way to improve instruction (Showers, 1982, 1984, and 1985).

The innovation we are concerned with in this paper is

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IFL. If its implementation is desired in Christian schools, then schools must provide the environment for its implementation. For a successful implementation in the classroom, all the components discussed above must be present. At the seminars that I attended, IFL trainers did a good job of dealing with the first component. They helped the participants gain a theoretical understanding of IFL and its implications for the Christian school. However, they need to re-design the format of their training to include the other components and encourage on-going working at it throughout the entire school year if transfer to the workplace is desired.

Even though implementation of IFL seems complex, it can be done. Those who are interested in IFL have defined it a variety of ways. Korniejczuk (1994) developed an empirically based model that could be used to identify levels of teacher implementation of faith and learning in the classroom. The model reveals what teachers do in the classroom at each level of integration (see appendix). In other words, there are operational definitions of IFL.

With clear goals and objectives, coupled with the operational definitions, trainers in IFL can find available training processes that can help deliver IFL better than what

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have been done in the past. They could adapt Joyce's (1992) workshop/workplace design which is grounded in the research on training adults to deliver complex strategies in classrooms or somesuch. For example

Workshop design

1. Theoretical understanding of IFL
2. Demonstration of IFL
3. Practice of IFL

Workplace design (Follow-up)

1. Immediate and sustained practice of IFL
2. Peer Support of IFL(coaching in study groups)
3. On-going assessment of implementation of IFL
4. Advanced training and tracking student outcomes (Joyce, 1992, adapted).

This design will foster quality in training and encourage on-going development on IFL.

Jesus' Professional Development Methodology

Jesus is our Master Teacher and an expert on teaching methodologies. It is interesting to note that Jesus' method of teaching incorporated the components that Joyce and Showers identified as effective for professional development programs. Pazmino (1988) observes that Jesus' discourse with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24) included some key components such as

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- discussion
- open inquiry
- correction and clarification
- role modelling
- and the need for response (p. 33).

Pazmino notes that the educational experience Jesus had with His disciples included both "the dimensions of declaration and dialogue" (p. 33). Jesus not only engaged the minds of His disciples, but also their "affections, wills, and actions" (p.33). "Here was an educational encounter that called for head, heart, and hand response to the good news declared by Jesus" (p. 33).

Youssef (1986) also listed four methods that Jesus used to develop His disciples and suggests that they can be used in any field. They are

- training precepts
- showing by example
- demonstrating by results
- pointing to the witness of others (pp. 165-167)

According to Youngberg (1994), Held identified 13 different kinds of questions used by Jesus and counted at least more than 100 of them (p. 65).

Even though Youssef and Pazmino do not include practice

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as part of Jesus' method of discipling, Luke (chapter 10) records that after Jesus had instructed His disciples for a while He sent them out two by two into the cities, saying to them, "Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves" (verse 33).

It is exciting to discover that research is supporting the effectiveness of the techniques that Jesus used in training His followers. These techniques, when combined in any professional development programs on integration of faith and learning can also help Christian teachers to implement IFL in the classrooms as they helped the Master Teacher to disciple His followers.

The following table gives an analysis of the effect sizes for training outcomes by training components. It suggests that when theory, demonstration/modelling, practice with feedback, and coaching are combined in the delivery of any innovation the maximum result can be achieved. This is also possible in the delivery of integration of faith and learning in the classroom.

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Effects of Professional Development
Classroom Application

| | Knowledge | Demonstration of behavior | Transfer to work setting |
|---|---|---|---|
| Presentation of concepts and theory | 85% | 15% | 10% |
| Demonstration of behavior | 85% | 18% | 10% |
| Low-risk practice with feedback (micro-teaching) | 85% | 80% | 15% |
| Coaching in work setting re: behavior and decisions | 90% | 90% | 80% |

Bellanca's (1995, p. 23) adaptation from Joyce & Showers, Student Achievement through Staff Development (New York: Longman, 1988, p. 71 and 1995, p. 112.

The table shows that 85% of participants will gain an acceptable level of knowledge when theory and concepts of any innovation is presented without demonstration, practice, and coaching, but only 10% of them will transfer the skill they learned to the workplace. However, when coaching and other components are included in the delivery of any innovation, it is possible that 90% of the participants will transfer the skills learned into the workplace overtime.

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Bringing it together: Professional Development and IFL

Research has identified many advantages of professional development programs that include the components discussed above. Such programs have led to improvement both in individuals and in the entire school. Joyce and Showers (1989) observe that "the ultimate goal of professional development is changing the culture of learning for both the adults and students so that engagement and betterment is a way of life in schools". A synthesis of research on staff-development has also revealed that these programs impact student performance (Showers, Joyce, & Bennett, 1987). But much more than this I see professional development programs as a channel for perpetuating integration of faith and learning in our schools just as the gospel was perpetuated during the days of the apostles.

Plantinga (1980) calls on Christian teachers in a Christian college to get together with their colleagues from time to time in order to deliberate upon the work that is done "in reinterpreting and reconstructing knowledge on a Christian basis, and to see how they can best help each other along" (p. 88).

Holmes (1987) observes that for integration of faith and learning to become a reality on Christian campuses we need to

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make it an "intellectual activity that goes on as long as we keep learning anything at all" (p. 46), and suggests that "the college must cultivate an atmosphere of Christian learning". (p. 49). Both Plantinga and Holmes encourage interdisciplinary dialogue among faculty members to promote integration. Plantinga invites Christian scholars to regard themselves "as part of a Christian *community* of scholarship" (p. 88)

Even though Plantinga and Holmes are addressing college professors, these same principles apply at all educational levels. In other words, teachers and administrators in K-12 as well as those on the college level need to get together periodically to develop personal skills for integrating faith and learning in the classroom. This calls for study groups on the Christian school campuses.

A study group has been defined as "a group of four to six faculty" (Henriquez-Roark, 1995, p. 69) whose purpose is to implement educational innovations. Study groups are support groups that provide opportunities for regular dialogue and interaction among teachers during the teaching year. Gaikwad (1991) observes that study groups enhance implementation of an innovation. Duffour (1991) and Murphy (1992) postulate that creating small, supportive groups where teachers meet to ask

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questions and discuss their concerns and ideas about a new program significantly increases the possibility of their adopting the program. Moreover, such groups help to reduce isolation and encourage testimonies about the success of the program (Duffour, 1991).

Teachers in Christian schools need study groups on their campuses in order to maintain continuity and effectiveness in the implementation of IFL in the classrooms. To provide time for these activities, each campus could designate one hour per week or four hours per month for faith-learning activities on their calendar of events; or each group could work out its own schedule. Study groups could be structured homogeneously or heterogeneously, but heterogeneous groups work better. This could be done by mixing faculty members and administrators, experienced and inexperienced faculty members on IFL, teachers in different subject areas, male and female. Alternatively, members could be grouped according to their subject areas. In any case, people work best in groups they feel comfortable with. Groups of six or less seem to work better (Murphy, 1992) because they provide diversity of opinions and allow time for individual participation. Some training will be required for successful operation of the study groups.

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It will be important to remember that the purpose of the study groups is to assist teachers in acquiring the knowledge and skills they need to integrate faith and learning. A variety of approaches can be used at such meetings, such as the following:

- time to exchange ideas about faith implementation to find out what integration of faith and learning looks like and sounds like in the classrooms,
- time for discussing the various modes of integration. This will help us to see where we are on the ladder of faith implementation in the classrooms,
- discuss various approaches to integration,
- develop specific plans for the application to our teaching,
- practice specific strategies for teaching content and values such as cooperative learning, inquiry, simulations, and inductive reasoning,
- time to share frustrations and concerns or give testimonies of their discoveries and successes as they experiment with ideas on implementation of IFL in their classrooms,
- other ideas that surface once we begin and get involved.

In conclusion, professional development can be viewed as discipling. Two of the teachers I interviewed at an IFL seminar defined IFL as discipleship. Putting the two together, professional development programs on IFL that incorporate the methods that Jesus used to train His disciples--methods that have been supported by current research--go hand in hand with

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implementation of IFL in the classrooms. Such programs will help to achieve several things:

- IFL will be perpetuated in Christian schools just as Jesus' methods perpetuated the gospel during the days of the apostles.
- It can give us new insights and open new horizons on the Christian's faith journey so that integration will happen in the lives of both teachers and students.
- It will foster cooperation, support, and collegiality between administrators and their teachers.
- And it will transform our schools into learning communities where the beginning of wisdom remains the fear of the Lord (Proverbs 1:7 and 9:10).

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Table 24

*IFL Empirical Model*

| Level of Implementation | Characteristics | Examples |
|---|---|---|
| **No deliberate implementation** | | |
| Level 0:<br>No knowledge<br>No interest | Teacher has little or no knowledge of IFL.<br>Teacher is doing nothing to be involved in IFL.<br>Teacher is not convinced that IFL can be carried out in the subject.<br>Teacher thinks that the subject he/she teaches is not related to faith. | "IFL is only extracurricular; cannot be implemented in the curriculum."<br>"I do not know how to implement IFL."<br>"I have other priorities in mind."<br>"I cannot do it in my subject."<br>"I know how to do it, but I do not have institutional support." |
| Level 1:<br>Interest | Teacher has acquired or is acquiring information on IFL.<br>Teacher is aware that IFL should be incorporated in his/her classes.<br>Teacher is looking for ways to deliberately implement IFL.<br>Teacher thinks that it may be worthwhile to include IFL in future planning. | "I know very little about IFL."<br>"I do not like superficial integration, thus I am looking for appropriate ways."<br>"I am looking for information on how to implement IFL." |
| Level 2:<br>Readiness | Teacher knows how to implement IFL in at least some themes.<br>Teacher is preparing to deliberately implement IFL at a definite future time. | "I am going to incorporate some integration I have tried in my course plan."<br>"I have decided to systematically introduce some things I know." |

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| Level of Implementation | Characteristics | Examples |
|---|---|---|
| **Deliberate implementation** | | |
| Level 3: Irregular or superficial use | Deliberately integrated, but generally unplanned.<br>There is no coherent Christian worldview.<br>Irregular use. Only some themes are integrated throughout the general context of the subject.<br>Superficial use. Use of spiritual content for secular purposes without meaning.<br>Management concerns disturb IFL. | "I know that what I am doing is not the best, but this is a Christian school and I have to do something."<br>"I do not know how to plan IFL."<br>"I only feel confident with two themes: Creation and Evolution."<br>"I do not like planning IFL. I do it consciously but spontaneously." |
| Level 4: Conventional | There is a stabilized use of IFL, but no changes are made in ongoing use.<br>Syllabus and objectives show IFL in at least some themes.<br>IFL is based on teacher's talking rather than student response.<br>Teacher knows how to implement IFL.<br>IFL shows coherent implementation. | "I include IFL in my unit planning so I can remember to do it."<br>"It is not often that I change what I have planned." |
| Level 5: Dynamic | Teacher varies the implementation of IFL to increase impact on students.<br>Teacher can describe changes that he/she had made in the last months and what is planned in a short term.<br>Change of strategies and themes according to student needs or interests.<br>Students draw conclusions of IFL. | "I just look at their [students'] faces and know what they are thinking. I encourage them to draw conclusions."<br>"I vary my IFL strategies according to the needs of my students." |
| Level 6: Comprehen-sive | Teacher cooperated with colleagues on ways to improve IFL.<br>Regular collaboration between two or more teachers increased impact on students.<br>The whole school (or at least a group of teachers) provided a coherent Christian worldview and emphasized student response. | |